MESSAGE NO. 1

OF

HIS EXCELLENCY F. W. PICKENS,

TO

THE LEGISLATURE,

AT THE

ANNUAL SESSION OF NOVEMBER, 1861.

COLUMBIA, S. C.:
CHARLES P. PELHAM, STATE PRINTER.
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Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives:

It has been so short a time since I communicated to you my views on the general interests of the State, that I now most respectfully urge your immediate consideration of the measures which I then recommended.

The first measure of great importance is the thorough reorganization of all the reserve military forces of the State. Under the general resolution passed at your recent extra session, I have endeavored to raise battalions and regiments, by offering to commission the field officers if they mustered companies into immediate service, as the emergency was pressing. The Legislature adjourned soon after meeting, without doing anything more definite, and I acted, as I supposed, for the best. But I now desire your confirmation of the same, and urge that a general system be adopted by which to regulate my conduct hereafter. The old militia system has been entirely deranged by the officers, in most instances, having accepted service in other organizations, and I recommend that field officers in all the regiments and battalions of the State be forthwith appointed, in order to effect as speedy an organization as possible. I would except from this the fourth brigade of the second division, at least as far as the City of Charleston is concerned, because that portion of our militia has been preserved, and is now in a high state of drill and thorough organization.

Since your extra session, our State has been invaded by a powerful and thoroughly armed fleet, carrying the heaviest guns. The channel through which they entered is two miles and a half wide, and is the deepest on the Southern coast. In the earth-works that had been erected, they were resisted by brave and heroic men, but such batteries were not calculated to resist a bombardment of four hundred guns. They were constructed to turn marauding parties embracing a limited number of vessels.

To make the defence of such a harbor perfect, large floating batteries or gun-boats, bearing guns of the heaviest calibre, are essential. The region that the military possession of Port Royal gives the enemy control over, will embrace about six thousand negroes, and, perhaps, four thousand bales of cotton. Most of this will be burnt. A true and patriotic people will

burn their productions and property rather than it shall fall into the hands of their infamous invaders. These islands are surrounded by arms of the sea, and were occupied by highly refined and intelligent proprietors. They are so various and detached that they are easily invaded by an enemy who have power on the ocean, but, as far as military position is involved, their possession brings the enemy but very little nearer to any permanent invasion of the State. Our sea-coast has been possessed, heretofore, by threatening foes in our first revolution, and then again in eighteen hundred and thirteen, and yet, notwithstanding we were much weaker than at present, the haughty and defiant spirit of our people repelled them from the interior, and there was not an hour or a moment, in our darkest days, when there was the slightest fear as to any permanent conquest of our State.

During the days of our first war for independence, South Carolina had to contend with a powerful foreign foe in front, and with fierce and terrible savage tribes from the rear, while, at the same time, she had the bloody and revengeful tory around the very hearth-stones of our homes, yet she never faltered in her onward and daring course. From her sea-coast to her mountains there is scarcely the distance of a Sabbath-day's journey from one battle-field to another, but where the bones of our ancestors now lie to mark out the *via sacra* along which their descendants may march again to independence. We are now a united people. From the highest to the lowest there is one universal, stern, fixed resolve, to make the State a vast mausoleum for the bones of freemen, rather than hold it as an inheritance for living bondsmen.

The high-toned and intelligent people of our islands, who have been so deeply harassed, deserve our warmest sympathy, and I earnestly urge that everything shall be immediately done, within your proper jurisdiction, that can be, to give them all the aid possible. I recommend that in certain Districts or Parishes of the State, that may be designated, Provost Marshals shall be appointed, who will take command of the overseers on all plantations in the District or Parish, and organize a system of local police, with strict accountability. These Marshals should have power to administer oaths, and hold summary jurisdiction over all slaves and suspected persons who may be passing, without ostensible occupation or responsible papers; and, upon proper affidavits, all such should be committed to the military or civil authorities, whenever the Marshal may think it necessary. He should put himself in communication, also, with the commandant of the nearest military post, and might have authority to call on all such to aid him in his police supervision within his District or Parish. In most instances, the owners of slaves are in the ranks, defending the country, and they cannot, therefore, exercise the ordinary jurisdiction with their overseers. The duty of the Marshal should be to give that protection to slaves

which is necessary, on account of the absence of their masters. In many portions of the country, all the Magistrates are also in the army, and the power to administer oaths and have summary jurisdiction is necessary.

The patrol system has likewise been deranged by the breaking up of the Beat Companies, and the proper organization of all overseers, under Provost Marshals, for specified districts of the country, would provide a substitute for the present. The Marshals may not be paid, but agents or assistants might be; and let the chiefs be selected from men of independence and long high standing. If any measure is to be adopted in relation to this matter, it ought to be done as soon as possible, for on the islands of our sea-coast there is, at present, much confusion, and great necessity for a strong police in some shape or form.

Our Nautical School, patronized by the State, has rendered active and useful service at various times, in our harbor and on the coast; and as we are now to build up a Navy in the South, their training and skill will be of great advantage. I assigned to them the Petrel, a vessel eminently suited to be made a School Ship. I hope this will meet with your approbation, and that the School will be particularly cared for under the management of its efficient superintendents. Papers, showing its efficiency, are herewith transmitted, for your information.

The authority given me by the Convention to appoint a Council, terminates with this session of the Legislature. I respectfully urge that, with the complicated and increased business of this office, it is impossible for me to attend to all duties required of me. In this pressing emergency, for the present, I request that I may continue at least a Secretary of the Treasury, to superintend the management in the details of raising the funds and disbursing them, and also that I shall be allowed a special Secretary, to be in constant attendance, with a competent salary. The increased business and my constant engagements make these arrangements absolutely necessary.

At the recent extra session I was authorized to raise three hundred thousand dollars. The Banks very patriotically made the proper arrangement. But I urge upon you the adoption of measures to place our resources upon the most permanent and fixed basis. For the proper support of every thing connected with the military wants of the State, at least fifteen hundred thousand dollars will be required for the year. An estimate of details is herewith submitted for the examination of your committees at as early a moment as possible.

I also desire that you will provide some satisfactory arrangement to indemnify the Bank of the State for its advances. Connected with this subject, and a proper system of taxation, I most respectfully call your attention to the points urged in my recent Message at the extra session.

If the State assumes the payment of her quota of the Confederate War Tax, it will be for your wisdom to devise the ways and means. The provisions of that Act seem to require that it shall be done by the first of December. If the State assumes the payment, it will thereby save ten per cent. on the amount of our quota.

Justice requires that a stay of execution or levy should be directed by law on all debts that may be due by our patriotic troops in all branches of service. I earnestly call your attention again to this subject. If there is any pure and disinterested service to the country, rendered from patriotic devotion alone, it comes from the ranks of our loyal and true soldiers. Perhaps, for the present, all civil process ought to be suspended, even before judgment is obtained.

We should take the earliest steps to secure the manufacture of small arms, cannon and powder in our own State. We have iron in Spartanburg and York, peculiarly suited, by its adhesive qualities, for cannon. There are but two places in the whole country equal to it, one in New Jersey and one on the Cumberland River, in Tennessee. Many of our best cannon were cast there in eighteen hundred and fourteen, and I have recent information that induces me to believe the owners are prepared to cast them again. In eighteen hundred and fourteen there was a large rifle factory in Greenville District. There are now in Pickens District two powder-mills, operating only on a small scale, for want of material, and perhaps, proper encouragement. I hope there may be some steps taken to encourage all these works, by authorizing liberal contracts, and by placing at my disposal such means as you may think advisable. The State should also give encouragement to raising and manufacturing wool enough for our necessary wants. The slopes and spurs of our mountain region are eminently suited for all these purposes, and the attention of our people cannot be turned too soon to the developement of all our internal and domestic resources. There are very few sections of country better suited to manufactures of all kinds than the rolling and upper part of this State.

Individuals are taught by reading and reflection, but a whole people are only taught by great events. Under a free Government, necessity or interest alone can force a country to develop its resources. Driven to assert our separate independence by wrongs and insults that no people could bear without degradation, we will find, in the progress of events, new channels of prosperity opened, and new sources of enterprise and industry discovered, which will make our country what Providence intended it to be—with its balmy climate—not only independent, but equal, in every particular, to the freest and bravest amongst the free and the brave of this earth.

These confederated States embrace an area equal to Europe, with rivers more vast and mighty, and with a mountain range, if not so high, yet the

noblest and broadest that stretch through any country. The mineral resources of this range in coal, iron, copper, gold, and (if we embrace Missouri) lead, are such as of themselves alone make the basis of a powerful empire. Then, if we include the productions of cotton, rice, tobacco, sugar, wheat, and Indian corn, when fully developed, the imagination has never yet gone beyond the resources of these States, now rising, with giant proportions, to stand an equal amongst the nations of the world, after strangling the serpents that encircled the cradle of our infancy. For the arrogant and supercilious race of the North to wage a war for the permanent subjugation of such a country, and then their attempt to clothe ten millions of freemen in the livery of bondage, only shows that the gods first make mad those whom they intend to destroy. In the former ages of the world, the sabre, with brutal numbers, was the arbiter of empire; and the ferocity of Northern hordes overpowered and subjugated the more civilized and refined portions of the earth. But since the invention of artillery, with gun-powder, which gives a few the capacity to defend themselves against the many, no brave and united people have ever been conquered. If a foreign foe has ever conquered them, it has been by rivalships and divisions amongst themselves. It is only in this way that any free and brave people can ever be enslaved by invaders. Let every man, high and low, come to the altar of his country, and sacrifice upon it every unhallowed and selfish aspiration or thought, and, laying their hands upon that altar, swear allegiance to the country, and nothing but the country, and that it shall forever be free.

Let this be done, and the country is free, beyond the reach of any earthly power to thwart our destiny or balk our onward march to independence. The God of Battles will guide us. Let no man falter or doubt. The sword of the brave and the free will flash and gleam, as it has ever done, high in triumph over the perilous ridge of victory. We may have a dreary waste to serve our pilgrimage in, but the promised land is before us, and if we look with steadfast faith to a superintending Providence, our inheritance in it is as fixed and certain as the star of fate itself.

F. W. PICKENS.